

Message Text

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 DURBAN 00317 011052Z
ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 HA-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15
ICA-11 /069 W
-----035117 011100Z /12

R 261245Z MAY 78
FM AMCONSUL DURBAN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2931
INFO AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN
AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG
AMEMBASSY MASERU

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE DURBAN 0317

CAPE TOWN ALSO FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, SF (TRANSKEI)
SUBJECT: TRANSKEI BANS METHODIST CHURCH OF SOUTH AFRICA

REF: (A) DURBAN 040; (B) DURBAN A-09; (C) DURBAN A-19

1. BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED: IN TERMS OF AN OFFICIAL DECREE
GAZETTED MAY 26 PRIME MINISTER MATANZIMA MADE GOOD HIS EARLIER
THREATS (REFS A AND B) AND DECLARED THE METHODIST CHURCH OF
SOUTH AFRICA AN UNDESIRABLE ORGANIZATION, BANNING ITS OPERATION
IN TRANSKEI. REPORTS FROM TRANSKEI INDICATE MATANZIMA WILL
SOON INTRODUCE LEGISLATION IN THE ASSEMBLY ESTABLISHING A
METHODIST CHURCH OF TRANSKEI TO REPLACE THE NOW-BANNED
ORGANIZATION.

2. THE BANNING WAS GAZETTED THE DAY AFTER PASSAGE OF NEW
SECURITY LEGISLATION, THE "UNDESIRABLE ORGANIZATIONS ACT"
EMPOWERING THE GOVERNMENT TO BAN ORGANIZATIONS AND SEIZE
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 DURBAN 00317 011052Z

THEIR ASSETS IF THEY ARE DEEMED TO BE A THREAT TO THE NATION'S
SECURITY. SOURCES TELL US THE ACT WAS DRAFTED WITH THE METHODIST
CHURCH IN MIND AND WAS PUSHED THROUGH IN TWO WEEKS, WITHOUT
SIGNIFICANT DEBATE OR OPPOSITION.

3. THE METHODIST CHURCH IN SOUTH AFRICA REACTED TO THE BANNING
BY ASKING MATANZIMA TO RECONSIDER HIS ACTION. A SOUTH AFRICAN

PROGRESSIVE FEDERAL PARTY MP, DR. ALEX BORAIN, A FORMER HEAD OF THE METHODIST CONFERENCE IN SOUTH AFRICA, CALLED THE ACTION "RECKLESS AND TRAGIC" AND PREDICTED IT WOULD SPLIT THE CHURCH IN TRANSKEI FROM TOP TO BOTTOM. KNOWLEDGE GUZANA, A FORMER HEAD OF THE OPPOSITION DEMOCRATIC PARTY IN TRANSKEI AND A LONG-TIME OPPONENT OF MATANZIMA, HAS LED THE OPPOSITION TO THE NATIONALIZATION WITHIN THE CHURCH IN TRANSKEI (REF C). HE INDICATED HE WOULD CONTINUE TO FIGHT THE ACTION, WHICH HE ALSO EXPECTED TO CAUSE A NATIONWIDE PROTEST.

4. FYI: THE METHODIST CHURCH IS TRANSKEI'S MOST POWERFUL RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATION. BOTH THE PRIME MINISTER AND HIS BROTHER GEORGE MATANZIMA, THE MINISTER OF JUSTICE, ARE LAY PREACHES IN THE CHURCH AND REPORTS INDICATE MOST OF THE CABINET MINISTERS AND MEMBERS OF THE ASSEMBLY ARE METHODISTS. END FYI.

5. POST RECORDS INDICATE THERE IS ONE METHODIST MISSION IN TRANSKEI WITH AMERICAN STAFF, THE GREENVILLE MISSION HOSPITAL. HOWEVER, WHEN CONTACTED BY POST, THEY SAID THEY ARE "FREE METHODISTS" NOT ASSOCIATED WITH THE METHODIST CHURCH OF SOUTH AFRICA AND THEREFORE DO NOT EXPECT THEIR ACTIVITIES TO BE AFFECTED BY THE BAN. END UNCLASSIFIED.

6. BEGIN LOU: COMMENT: THERE IS NO CLEAR INDICATION WHY MATANZIMA PERSISTED IN HIS DECISION TO BAN THE CHURCH. THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 03 DURBAN 00317 011052Z

ISSUE, CHRISTMAS GREETINGS AND TACIT RECOGNITION OF TRANSKEI, WAS A MINOR MATTER AND WOULD HAVE ESCAPED WIDESPREAD ATTENTION HAD HE NOT REACTED SO PETULANTLY IN JANUARY (REF A). EVEN SO, NUMEROUS FACE-SAVING OPPORTUNITIES WERE OFFERED TO HIM BY THE METHODIST CHURCH BUT HE REFUSED TO BE DETERRED. THERE SEEMINGLY IS NO IMMEDIATE INTERNAL POLITICAL DIVIDEND TO BE EARNED, AS THERE WAS IN BREAKING RELATIONS WITH SOUTH AFRICA, AND INDEED MATANZIMA COULD INCREASE DOMESTIC CRITICISM OF HIS REGIME BY MOVING AGAINST THE CHURCH. WE WILL MONITOR THE PROGRESS OF THE NATIONALIZATION AND WOULD APPRECIATE ANY INDICATION DEPARTMENT CAN PROVIDE ON ATTITUDE OF THE METHODIST CHURCH IN THE U.S. TO THE EVENTS AND EXTENT, IF ANY, OF AMERICAN PERSONNEL OR ASSETS OF THE U.S. METHODIST CHURCH WHICH MAY BE BE AT RISK IN TRANSKEI. FUGIT

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: TRANSKEI, CHURCH STATE RELATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 26 may 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978DURBAN00317
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780229-0210
Format: TEL
From: DURBAN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780516/aaaaamrz.tel
Line Count: 109
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 96ecb695-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 DURBAN 40, 78 DURBAN A-9, 78 DURBAN A-19
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 05 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: N/A
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2555544
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: TRANSKEI BANS METHODIST CHURCH OF SOUTH AFRICA
TAGS: PINT, SOCI, SF, METHODIST CHURCH
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/96ecb695-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014